

QUESTION ABOUT CASES POTENTIALLY SPIKING BECAUSE OF REOPENING

Well, I think it's interesting. We did the phase one like six weeks ago. So the idea that all of a sudden now we linked to that, but when I went back and looked at I said, Okay, what about Memorial Day because a lot of people thought that weekend maybe we'll do something but if you look at Mike from the Memorial Day weekend, I looked from, I think this the 24th till today, Miami Dade COVID hospitalizations are down 13%.

Duval county, where they're going to have the Republican National Committee Memorial Day weekend to the present, COVID hospitalizations are down 50 percent. And so I think it's important for people to understand who is being tested now, compared to who was being tested in March in early April, when we had kind of our peaks, then back then you needed to have symptoms. And you really unless you got a doctor's note, in our test sites, because the CDC guidance, you're looking at age 65, or above, so the majority of cases we were getting, were kind of in people in more of the high risk groups.

Now we have widespread testing, we're doing three times as many tests a day now than we did at the end of March, which is partially what the numbers, but partially -- you don't have to have symptoms. You don't have, to there's no age restrictions. So what you're seeing is why I think the number one outbreak we've seen is in the agriculture communities. You're seeing there was just a big case dump. In North Central Florida, there was a watermelon farm. You've had farm communities in Collier, Palm Beach, Martin, Levy, Hendry. And what happens is these are workers that are working close together. Once one gets it, it tends to spread very rapidly throughout those areas. Now there have been mitigation strategies that are in place to do it. The good thing about that is these are people in low risk groups. So you have almost none of them end up hospitalized. The fear would be is if they're in multi generational housing and maybe have contact with the senior citizen, or if they're going out into town. We're also concerned about a lot of these farmworkers, this is about the time of year they start to leave to go the other states so we're talking with some of the other states to let them know we also have our Department of Health is working with our agriculture, our growers, to mitigate any of the spread.

But if you look at the state of Florida and the percent positivity by county, the all counties that are 10% and we don't have any I think that are about 15, but the 10 to 15% counties is all being Because they either have agriculture outbreaks, or prisons or both in some of the rural counties, you know, the prisons, they'll have big, big time population will test positive. So we made a decision about three weeks ago with the Department of Health to have all the local county health go into these communities and test test test. So you're seeing part of it is that another part of it is we're now almost finished testing all staff and residents of long term care facilities. If you look, the average member of the public goes and gets tested, and you have 95 to 98% test negative. In those long term care facilities, the residents test positive at about 8%. So that's a higher positive, not a huge positivity, I mean, certainly anything under 10 is considered to be considered good and particularly that high risk environment, but you do see that.

So we should be having all those tests done all those rules. Remaining results reported, hopefully over the next few days. And so that will also be another thing. But that has absolutely been a big factor in what we've seen over the last couple weeks, because those are the most difficult areas. But I think that's the right thing to do to go into the areas where we know you're more likely to see outbreaks, isolate those outbreaks so that it's not spreading beyond in there. And then what you also have now to CVS, all these places, you can now go get tests. And so I think what we're seeing is of the people that are testing positive way more are in the 25 to 45. Then what's happening two months ago, well, those 25 to 45 year olds, the clinical consequences of them testing positive is usually very, very modest, because they're not in the high risk groups.

But I think you have businesses that are really working to get their employees tested. And for example, if you're working at a restaurant You get tested, and you're positive, then you're isolated so that that's a good thing, because it prevents that from being able to be spread. Now, these are people who, by and large, do not have any symptoms. So they're being told as a precautionary measure to test. So we're going to continue going, you know, we'll be at 30,000 roughly test results a day, for the foreseeable future. You know, if you remember, about a month ago, I was imploring people to get tested, because we just weren't having enough people show up. And I think part of it is in the businesses have wanted more people to go in. And then obviously, we've done a lot more with agriculture community, but I do think you're starting to see more people in the public that are interested in getting tested. So that is a good thing to be doing. And we but I don't think I mean, if you look at the numbers, you got to look at the clinical consequences and we know, and now with the data overwhelmingly, that the clinical consequences are almost entirely borne by the people that are 65 and older, not entirely. But if you look 85% of the COVID related fatalities in Florida are age 65 and above, and we've actually had more COVID related fatalities age 90 and above than we've had age 65 and below.

So if you're seeing an area where you have positive cases, and they're in that younger demographic, probably not as significant clinically, it is significant and make sure that they're isolated and then they're not interacting with seniors and particularly, obviously, we're at a nursing home or a long term care facility.

RNC QUESTIONS

Yes, sir. Well, what we'll see, I mean, that's a couple months away. You know, as I mentioned, the Duval County, you know, their hospitalizations are down 50% since May 24 for COVID related, which obviously sucks good sign. They've had a relatively minor outbreak compared to other parts of the country. But I know they're all working on that. I know they're going to be talking with local government, local health officials all this. And they're going to be able to work it out. I would remind people that we just were through an era, a two week period, where you had 10s of thousands of people gathering in very close proximity, Hollywood, California, New York all these places. There is not yet evidence and I'm aware of that that has sparked any type of significant outbreaks.

We have our health folks looking to see if we see anything in Florida. I think the places that had the biggest demonstrations were Orlando and Tampa. So they are looking at that. But as of now, you have not seen evidence that that has really led to any type of thing. In fact, in Florida, we're seeing it's the close lengthy contact in the workplace like in the agriculture that's really that's really driving or in in long term care facilities. So but I think that's going to be something that people are going to need to continue to look at. If we're now another week out, and you don't see any outbreaks in any of those places. Well, that's a signal to me that some of these outdoor events would likely be would likely be okay. If you had some, some basic precautions. Some of those demonstrators were wearing the mask, but obviously they weren't social distance. They were just too close together. Yes, sir.

QUESTION ABOUT SAFETY PRECAUTIONS AHEAD OF RNC

Yeah, I think well, first of all, I don't need I mean, the RNC is going to do a lot when they came to me. They said, you know, we plan on testing, we plan on doing this stuff. So it wasn't like they were coming empty handed. And just saying that they were expected to have nothing. They've been thinking about this a long time. And I think it'll be a mix of mitigation measures and testing. But but they are really working hard on it. They're working hard with the folks at the White House and so it was convinced to me that you know, that that It could be done in a way that that the minimize risk to folks. And of course, if you know some of the delegates span different, different demographics, if you're somebody who's in more the at risk demographic, that may be something that you want to consider in terms of whatever type of measures that you can do. Yes, ma'am. I sorry, I didn't hear you.

PULSE QUESTION

Okay. Oh, yeah. So the pulse. We put out a proclamation we've lowered the flag and half staff. Without question, one of the most dastardly deeds that's ever been done in the state of Florida. It's I think reverberates to this day and I think it was appropriate to continue to recognize the memorial of the anniversary with the flag at half staff, for the people of Orlando for LBGT community for the folks involved with Pulse nightclub, and, you know, we don't want to ever see anything like that happen again.

ANOTHER RNC QUESTION

Oh, well, I think it's a you're talking about a massive economic impact. I think you're gonna have folks that you're going to be able to spend a lot of money. I think it'll help with the economic recovery. And I think it's something that is that is good for Northeast Florida in particular, as they really get going. And they've actually, I tell you, if you look, look, we're not out of the woods with the jobs by any stretch, but to see what happened in May versus what was predicted. You

know, if we can continue to get people back to work that is going to alleviate so many problems that we're seeing in society and young people didn't talk about in March and April, all the negative effects about what was happening as a result of the mitigation. But the fact is those effects were real Florida we tried did our best to minimize those effects. And I think we did a better job than many other states. But let's not kid ourselves and act like that, that when those effects aren't profound and not just in terms of economics, in terms of social in terms of public health, for other things.

We are still now in a situation where we have a lot of kids that haven't gotten their immunizations. Now kids are at extremely low risk for COVID. But if you're not immunizing the kids, you could have outbreaks and other things like measles. We are still trying to get more people to go into the hospital for other ailments. If you look, we still even though we have all elective surgeries, everything is 100%, greenlight, do what you need to do. We still have between 25 and 30% of the hospital beds that are sitting empty right now. And part of that is because our COVID patients have been pretty stable over the last six weeks, but part of it is you don't have as many people that are going to be able to get treatment that they that they should be getting. Maybe that's still lingering fear of going to the hospital. But our message has been Take care of yourself, the hospital is going to be a safe place to go, you're having heart trouble. If you're having stroke symptoms, you do not want to put that off because then the health effects of that will will cascade.

Well, because I think initially the CDC guidelines where you had to be symptomatic, which most of them are asymptomatic. In fact, there was just there wasn't in Florida, but a Tyson chicken plant did they had one symptomatic worker, so they tested a bunch of them. And they had 199 asymptomatic positives. And so I think it was, very few those people if at all developed symptoms. And then When you have when you have the age range that they're in remember CDC initially was 65. and above. So a lot of that just fell through the cracks. But when we brought in the, the criteria, and we were doing a lot of that through drive through sites, so people would drive thru. I think those workers were probably less likely to take advantage of our drive thru and walk up sites, but we have those all over the state now. And so I think it's like, okay, and there's different reasons why they would have been probably a little shy about doing that.

But I think the thing was from a public health perspective, we were kind of identifying the area's we knew prisons, we knew nursing homes, that was kind of the the third leg if you looked around the country, those types of things. And so they made a concerted effort to go out and get that done. Now, we now have a lot of resources. Remember, in March, I was literally on the phone directing 100 swabs at a time to different hospitals because they were so scarce. Well, now we can order as many swabs as you want, that whole supply chain has really opened up.

So you have the ability to do some of that. And that does mean that you're testing people, a lot of people who are not not symptomatic. And so the good thing about the the, the ag, I mean,

clearly it's it's definitely taken off here. But the good thing is if you can mitigate it, and one thing we've noticed, they get driven to the to work sometimes in these buses. So you look and you have like all these people crowded into buses. So we're talking to Palm Beach, because they've got a number of the communities, they're thinking about, maybe get more buses. So you can have some people spread out a little bit. But you can definitely see it's just like really close contact. And then throughout the workday, you know, that's what you're seeing from from day to day. So, okay, well, very good. Thanks, guys.